

## INFORMATION REPORT

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SUBJECT Proposed Collaboration between Spanish Exiles and  
Paul-Henri Spaak for Ousting FRANCO

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1. Fernando VALERA, acting prime minister of the Spanish Republican Government-in-Exile, visited Paul-Henri SPAAK, former prime minister of Belgium, in late November or early December 1949, to propose that SPAAK, in his capacity as President of the Council of Europe, act as mediator in the search for a solution of the Spanish problem. The aim would be to democratize Spain so that she could participate as an active member of the Western bloc.
2. VALERA's arguments were that the experience of recent years and FRANCO's own nature have demonstrated that the FRANCO regime is unable to democratize itself; that acceptance of FRANCO as a "colleague" by the democratic world will be very difficult; that for the good of Spain, of Europe, and of the Western democracies, it is necessary to replace the FRANCO regime without violence. The problem consists, then, of finding the formula through which the necessary pressure can be exerted to force FRANCO out, substituting for him a transitional government to conduct free elections.
3. Communism will present no danger, VALERA said, unless Spaniards come to believe definitively that the only way to get rid of FRANCO is through Communism. If the democracies assume the role of liberator, Communist representation in free elections will be negligible. The mission of the Republican Institutions, and hence the reason for their continued existence, is to insure that Spain be permitted to express her will democratically.
4. The difficulty, said VALERA, lies in finding a mediator who inspires confidence in all the peninsular democrats and also in the Western democracies, especially the United States and Great Britain. The role of this personality would be to negotiate among all the opposition groups the establishment of a provisional government, guaranteeing a non-violent transitory situation. SPAAK, as a significant European figure, with a definitively western character, could logically intervene in this matter. VALERA assured SPAAK that the latter's intervention would be received with unanimous enthusiasm, not only by the democrats in exile, but also by the majority and the best among those who, having helped FRANCO to power, now are anxious to get rid of him - not excepting the "army," VALERA added. SPAAK, endowed with the confidence of Spanish elements and supported by all the European democratic organizations, could

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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negotiate effectively with the US to find the means to replace FRANCO by a regime which would permit the integration of Spain into the international sphere.

5. SPAAK indicated that he considered VALERA's suggestion responsive to European necessity. In turn he suggested an initial plan, as follows:

- a. The Republican Government in Exile would make a public statement along the lines of VALERA's exposition to SPAAK.
- b. Simultaneously, a numerous and select group of European democrats would issue a manifesto, adopting the idea of the republican declaration. This group of personalities would be selected by SPAAK, who would undertake to collect the signatures of the individual personalities.
- c. SPAAK then would take up the problem directly with the US Government, seeking the most practical means to force FRANCO to abandon power to a government for whose formation SPAAK would consent to be mediator. The US, added SPAAK, is in a position to exercise this pressure without the least violence; FRANCO would not resist for a moment a resolute suggestion which came from Washington.
- d. Negotiation must be started immediately, added SPAAK. At the meeting of the UN Assembly in March, the USSR will probably use the Spanish situation as a pawn against the western democracies. It is advisable to forestall that move.

7. VALERA, immediately after his conference with SPAAK, wrote to Alvaro de ALBORNOZ, Republican Prime Minister, who is in Mexico, relaying SPAAK's suggestions. ALBORNOZ opposed intervention by the Republican Government as such, but left the door open to some other procedure for continuing the negotiations.

8. About mid-December, VALERA discussed the matter with Jose Antonio de AGUIRRE, President of the Basque Government in exile, who gave his blessing to collaboration with SPAAK, although he considered that a manifesto along the lines set out in 5 b above would be dismissed as just another petition on behalf of the Republican Government in exile. As the instrument for collaboration, AGUIRRE suggested the Consejo Federal Espanol, a group of liberal Spaniards which has honorary membership in the Council of Europe headed by SPAAK. The Consejo Federal is widely representative, including among others Salvador de MADARIAGA, liberal Monarchist, Rodolfo LLORIS, Socialist, and Republican, Basque and Catalan representatives. VALERA agreed with AGUIRRE, and anticipated that ALBORNOZ would have no objection to collaboration between the Consejo Federal and SPAAK. There would then remain the task of persuading the other political forces, especially the Socialists and the Monarchists, to accept the idea.

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